REMARKS

By way of the foregoing amendments to the specification, minor errors have been corrected. No new matter has been introduced.

Claims 4 and 5 have been amended to correct the misplacement of numeral "5".

Early and favorable consideration with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

These changes have been made in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 as amended on November 7, 2000. Marked-up versions of Claims indicating the changes accompany this Preliminary Amendment.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: May 1, 2001

<u>**Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated May 1, 2001**</u>

Marked-up Claims

4.   The image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein every N pixel

from a pixel at an edge of the image in a predetermined direction within the image is the pixel

defined in the first condition, and a pixel which exists on a straight line including the target

pixel extending in the predetermined direction and which is positioned within a

predetermined range from the target pixel is the pixel defined in the second condition.[5.]

<u>5.</u>   The image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the storage unit

stores a third condition defining a position relative to the target pixel in a predetermined

direction specified by a user, and wherein the at least one related pixel includes a pixel

satisfying the third condition.